

GREAT WANDERERS CRACK WISBECH IN MEMORABLE FINISH

by ARGUS

Wycombe Wanderers 4,
Wisbech Town 2

SPURRED on by the full-throated roar of the Loakes Park crowd, Wycombe Wanderers, in a brilliant, shattering finish, flashed in two goals in the last four minutes to sweep dog-tired professional Wisbech out of the F.A. Cup.

Grown men behaved like schoolboys and shook hands with strangers while footballers hugged the ground as first Paul Bates, with a swift drive, and then diving, lightning-quick Michael Rockell scythed through the Wisbech goalkeeper.

The Wisbech veterans, rocking on their feet, hardly knew what hit them. Just when it looked odds-on on a cosy mid-week replay in the Fens, Wycombe exploded into electric action.

Craggy Cliff Trott burst through a tackle outside the Town penalty area and sent a searching pass through the Wisbech defence.

And there was Bates, centre-half Tommy McKenzie in frantic, despairing attendance, gliding through to net with the sort of calculated casualness he might have reserved for a practice game.

Just two minutes later Michael Rockell sailed through the air like a flying fish to crack his fair head against a Bates cross—quite the finest goal seen on the ground this season.

This was worth a dozen mopping-up operations against League sides, and Wycombe rose to the Cup lure like young lions. Although there were special heroes — the wandering Bates, who had a hand in all four goals, Trott, Jimmy Truett and Ron Fryer — this was essentially a solid, 100 per cent team job.

DEDICATION

Each man tried to play intelligent football. Quicker on the ball than the Wisbech Peter Pans, and twice as dangerous in cry for goal, the Wanderers thoroughly earned their win.

It speaks volumes for the dedication to personal fitness of the Wycombe boys that it was they, and not the part-time pros, who stormed through the final minutes.

The Wanderers' attack discovered some devil lacking in recent weeks, while the defence played soundly against a formidable Wisbech attack.

Old-wolf Jesse Pye, one of the "greats" of English soccer, still looks a class player. His burly figure conjures the ball as gracefully as ever, but the dynamite just wasn't there, and John Fisher, in a very sensible performance, kept the ex-Molyneux idol rationed to long-range shots.

Peppery little Billy Elliott, former England wingman and a tough handful for any full-back was the real threat to Wycombe, but John Beck, to his credit, never became flustered and increasingly robbed Billy of the ball as the game progressed.

ALL-ACTION

Equally as important as the barnstorming Wycombe climax was the all-action, non-stop opening specially prescribed for the Wisbech defence by coach Sid Cann. How it worked! Two goals in the first five minutes, both Cliff Trott credited, set the Wanderers alight.

Trott, scorer of the goal which knocked Oxford out of the Cup, did not have long to wait for his cup hat-trick. Flitting past the hapless MacKenzie on the left wing, Paul Bates sent a wizard pass across the face of the Wisbech goal for Trott to blast the ball way out of Streten's reach.

Three minutes later, Bates piloted Rockell through for the second goal, happy Trott anticipating magnificently, again supplying the winning drive.

UNHAPPY GUS

Wycombe fans purred with pleasure as the Wanderers produced a whole new array of glittering movements. Jack Tomlin, pounding down the wing like a two-year-old, gave ex-Ilford amateur Gus Simmons a miserable welcome back to Loakes Park, while young Rockell, on the right, has never played better since his return from injury;

Gradually the canny Wisbech men slowed the game down to their own speed and when they did, Wycombe had to defend for long periods.

A foxy old-timer's goal by Billy Elliott, in the 23rd minute, kept Town in the hunt, and ten minutes from the interval it was Elliott who slung a dipping centre into the Wycombe goalmouth. As Syrett seemed to misjudge the awkwardly-flighted ball, Moore headed it into the net. A few minutes later Elliott held his head in grief as his shot spun off the inside of a post.

After dominating the early part of the second half, Wisbech were given a taste of the early Wycombe fire, Streten making super saves from Rockell and Tomlin. Then it was the turn of Syrett to swallow dive.

End-to-end play, with neither goal in real peril, looked a certain prelude to a draw, and Wisbech seemed content. Then came the Trott - Bates - Rockell bomb-shell and four minutes of elation for Wycombe Wanderers' fans.